DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 367 378 IR 054 926

AUTHOR Sonnenfeld, Gary F.
TITLE The Treatment of the Occult in General Encyclopedias.
PUB DATE Nov 90
NOTE 45p.; M.L.S. Research Paper, Kent State University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses (042)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bias; Comparative Analysis; Content Analysis; *Encyclopedias; Indexing; Tables (Data)
IDENTIFIERS Encyclopedia Britannica

ABSTRACT

This paper is a content analysis of three general encyclopedias, "Encyclopedia Americana" (EA), "Encyclopaedia Brittanica" (EB), and "World Book Encyclopedia" (WBC), which quantifies the treatment of the occult. Entries are selected from each by starting with the article "Occultism" and tracing all cross-references. Cross-references are likewise selected from all cross-referenced terms. Entries are then analyzed statement by statement; each is then placed into one of 21 categories. The results are presented in ranked lists. Analysis concludes that the EA emphasizes miscellaneous information, background material, history, and favorable claims; EB emphasizes history and the social history and the social, cultural, and artistic origins of many occult beliefs; and WBC includes much miscellaneous information but also stresses background material, history, and positive claims. A glossary of occult terms is appended. (Contains 22 references.) (JLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 367 378

THE TREATMENT OF THE OCCULT IN GENERAL ENCYCLOPEDIAS

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Gary F. Sonnenfeld

November, 1990

1205549 26

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Rosemary Du Mont

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Master's Research Paper by

Gary F. Sonnenfeld

B.A., Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, 1989

M.L.S., Kent State University, 1990

Approved by

Adviser Lois Buttlar Date 11-13-90

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION ..... 1.

Need for the Study and Its Significance ..... 3.

Objectives ..... 4.

Assumption ..... 4.

Limitations ..... 5.

Definition of Terms ..... 5.

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ..... 7.

III. METHODOLOGY ..... 14.

Analysis ..... 19.

IV. RESULTS OF THE STUDY ..... 20.

Encyclopedia Americana ..... 20.

Encyclopaedia Britannica ..... 22.

World Book Encyclopedia ..... 24.

V. CONCLUSIONS ..... 27.

Meaning of the Results ..... 27.

Recommendations for Future Study ..... 30.

Conclusion ..... 31.

VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 32.

VII. APPENDIX ..... 35.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Various claims have been made about the occult; these range from claims that the occult can lead to murder and suicide to claims that the occult can cure all problems and lead to a higher awareness of the self. Both practitioners and skeptics alike are vocal about the worthiness or unworthiness of certain beliefs and practices. And yet, in spite of the fact that there is so much controversy surrounding the topic, it has rarely (with the exception of parapsychology, which is not universally recognized as a scholarly field) been considered as a topic for academic study.

Beginning in the 1960s, there has been a growing popular interest in occultism. Publishers of occult books have reaped the rewards of this rich renaissance, and sponsors of workshops, classes, and retreats with supernatural themes have grown wealthy. Some subjects, such as acupuncture, have gained respectability with scholars and researchers. Others, such as the previously mentioned parapsychology, retain a tenuous foothold in academic circles. The works of James Frazer, Joseph Campbell, and Carl Jung have lent legitimacy to some beliefs and practices, but most "rational minded" people are still quick to summarily dismiss the whole of the occult as fraud or nonsense.

The claim most often levelled against the occult is that it is accepted uncritically by adherents. While this may be true of many people, it is also true that most critical studies of occultism have focused primarily upon the efficacy of certain practices without taking into account the social and psychological benefits offered by these same practices, many of which have held important places in the lives of humanity since before the dawn of written history.

The study of any subject must begin with an overview. Some attempt must be made to show how the parts of the subject relate to each other and how the totality relates to the whole of human knowledge. In order to do this in a way that allows the student to grow into a critical researcher, this overview must be objective enough to permit free inquiry and avoid indoctrination.

One of the tools that libraries make available to promote independent inquiry is the general encyclopedia. The main purpose of such encyclopedias is to place all information into a relative context and condense it into a manageable form, thereby serving as indexing and abstracting vehicles for the total of human knowledge. Even though certain constraints make it impossible for general encyclopedias to include the entire scope and breadth of human thought, it is generally assumed that a good encyclopedia will present that which it does include in a fair and objective manner. In fact, bias is one of the prime considerations librarians must take into account when purchasing these works.

Since the occult is a popular subject that has lent itself to few critical yet objective overviews, it is reasonable to assume that information seekers will use general encyclopedias for this purpose;

it is, therefore, important for librarians to have an understanding of how the occult is treated in these sources.

Need for the Study and Its Significance

When selecting such tools as general encyclopedias, it is difficult for librarians to be aware of all biases that may exist within the work. An encyclopedia which may present clearly objective viewpoints on certain topics may, when presenting other subjects, distinctly lean toward one opinion or another. While this may be, to some extent, unavoidable, there are some issues which should, because of their likeliness to be objects of patron inquiry, be closely examined.

The occult is very popular in contemporary society. A lack of critical yet objective overviews concerning this subject is problematic in that inquirers are forced to choose between those works which only present a single opinion. Moreover, there is still a dearth of even very opinionated overviews. In such cases as when a patron would request general information about the occult, the librarian, in his or her role as readers' advisor or information specialist, should take care to be aware of the general trustworthiness of such information. The librarian may, therefore, rely upon what he or she considers an unbiased source.

This study will examine the treatment of the occult in three of the most highly respected general encyclopedias: Encyclopedia Americana, Encyclopaedia Britannica, and World Book Encyclopedia. While the scope of the subject studied here is very specific, it is hoped that the results can be taken as a general indication of the

biases that may exist in the editing and selection of articles by showing a tendency to treat topics in a certain manner. For example, if it is shown that an encyclopedia does not focus on the history of the occult, it is possible to conclude that it does not give much emphasis to the history of other topics either. It is also hoped that the methodology can be used as a model for future research.

Objectives

The objectives of this paper are as follows

1. To determine if the works in question present an objective overview of the selected topic.
2. To serve as a general indication of biases which may exist in the editing and selection of articles for inclusion in the works in question.
3. To serve as a model for future research.

Assumptions

1. People will use general encyclopedias to find information about occultism.
2. An objective overview to a subject is desirable.
3. Librarians should be aware of bias when they select a general encyclopedia.
4. Examination of part of a work will allow some degree of generalization as to the nature of the editorial administration responsible for that work.

Limitations

1. Only three encyclopedias will be examined.
2. Only those terms linked to occultism by means of "see" or "see also" references, as well as terms linked to these terms in a similar manner, will be studied.
3. Citation analysis will not be included as part of the study.
4. Charts, diagrams, tables, and visual representation are excluded from analysis.
5. Only the most current editions of the chosen encyclopedias are to be examined.

Definitions of Terms

The **occult** is a belief system which claims access to or control over powers not associated with a currently recognized concept of the laws of nature. It differs from religion either in that the occult is usually not recognized by society as an organized body of beliefs or believers, or that it is considered harmful and detrimental to that society or its members. **Occultism** is the belief in or practice of occult powers. Occultism differs from esotericism; esotericism usually does not involve any unnatural powers, and it usually exists within the framework of an accepted religious organization.

General encyclopedias are those works which attempt to present a systematic and orderly analysis of the whole of human knowledge without any particular emphasis upon any area or aspect. While most encyclopedias are arranged alphabetically, cross-referencing and indexing are used to show the reader the position of any topic relative to others. An encyclopedia may be composed of

one or many volumes; however, for the purpose of this paper, only multi-volume works will be examined.

Bias is a tendency to present only one side of an issue in exclusion of the other or to give unequal weight to one aspect or another. Bias can also take the form of disproportionally emphasizing favorable or unfavorable qualities of any topic. **Objectivity**, as opposed to bias, is the tendency to give equal attention or emphasis to divergent viewpoints concerning a subject. Both of the above terms are, for the purposes of this study, to be used to refer to qualities of written communication.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

For the purposes of this study, the following print indexes were consulted: Library Literature (1970 to present); Library and Information Science Abstracts (1970 to the present); and Religion Index One (1977 to the present). The following sources were searched online through the Dialog database: America: History and Life (1964 to the present), Arts and Humanities Search (1980 to the present), Dissertation Abstracts Online (1861 to the present), Historical Abstracts (1973 to the present), Information Science Abstracts (1966 to the present), Legal Resource Index (1980 to the present), LISA (1969 to the present), Magazine Index (1959 to 1970; 1973 to the present), MLA Bibliography (1966 to the present), Newsearch (1990), PAIS International (1976 to the present), Philosopher's Index (1940 to the present), Population Bibliography (1966 to the present), Religion Index (1975 to the present), Social Scisearch (1972 to the present), and Sociological Abstracts (1963 to the present). The following indexes were searched on CD-ROM: ERIC (1966 to the present), PsychLit (1974 to the present), and UMI Periodical Abstracts (1986 to the present).

The results of these searches are divided into two main categories: books and articles that deal with modern occultism, and

articles that discuss publishing trends, library resources, and censorship in the area of the occult. It would be pointless to attempt, within the short scope of this paper, to discuss every book, article, or chapter dealing with encyclopedias. The criteria used for reviewing encyclopedias is well known.

Margot Adler's classic work, Drawing Down the Moon,[1] is the most complete and comprehensive work ever written on modern occultism, particularly witchcraft. Various chapters discuss the history of the craft, reasons why people become witches, and the beliefs and practices of various groups, as well as characteristics of the movement as a whole. The 1986 edition was particularly useful to this study because of the inclusion of a survey done by the author in 1985. While there is no copy of the actual questionnaire included, Adler did note her methods of data collection. Four-hundred and fifty copies were handed out at three different pagan festivals; of these, one-hundred and ninety-five were returned by the cutoff date. Responses were elicited in several areas, including religious upbringing, occupation, drug use, publicity and secrecy in the craft, and influences in choosing paganism. In this last category, twenty-seven percent indicated that "reading books" was their main reason.

A study related to Adler's is "An Empirical Study of Wiccan Religion in Postindustrial Society." [2] This research, published in 1986, was conducted by mailing questionnaires to editors of seventy-six

---

[1] Margot Adler, Drawing Down the Moon: Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers, and Other Pagans in America Today, Revised and Expanded Edition (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 22.

[2] R. George Kirkpatrick, Rich Rainey, and Kathryn Rubi, "An Empirical Study of Wiccan Religion in Postindustrial Society," Free Inquiry in Creative Sociology 14 (May 1986): 33-38.

witchcraft and occult journals and to leaders of two-hundred and sixty occult churches listed in two directories. The authors note: "Snowball sampling expanded the population to include both public and private Witches who are independent or members of a coven."[3] The results are important in that they show general demographic breakdowns of witches and test their social psychological variables according to the California F-scale, which is used to test personal qualities such as independence, authoritativeness, and need for acceptance. They indicate that witches are fairly evenly distributed between rural and urban areas and that they are typically highly educated and from prestigious occupations.

Perhaps the best scholarly overview of occultism is Marcello Truzzi's "Towards a Sociology of the Occult: Notes on Modern Witchcraft."[4] While dealing largely with witchcraft, Truzzi gives a general overview of occultism, dividing it into three types. The first type of occultism deals with unexplained or anomalous phenomena, such as sea monsters or UFOs. The second type of occultism is that which is concerned with a paranormal relationship between unconnected events. The most typical example of this type is magic: someone believes that a certain spell or ritual will influence some occurrence at a distance. The third type of occultism is that at which complex occult theories are developed. At this level, occultism is almost indistinguishable from mysticism and esotericism. Occult

---

[3]Ibid., 33.

[4]Marcello Truzzi, "Towards a Sociology of the Occult: Notes on Modern Witchcraft," in Religious Movements in Contemporary America, ed. Irving I. Zaretsky and Mark P. Leone (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974): 628-645.

philosophies such as Theosophy exist at this level.

The literature also indicates that occultists are increasingly taking their right to freedom very seriously. Recently, practitioners have fought, and won, religious discrimination cases involving the U.S. Air Force,[5] a Toronto college,[6] and the Salvation Army.[7] Furthermore, in a separate case, the Supreme Court of Georgia ruled that one group of occultists was to be granted legal, tax exempt status.[8] Not everyone is equally happy about these occurrences, as Daniel Jussim indicates in his article "An Attack on Witchcraft (Bill to Repeal Tax Exempt Status of Covens)."[9]

Literature of the library and book publishing world has included several articles concerning the occult; these articles, however, were written from a popular, not a research, perspective. Nonetheless, they indicate trends that are important to this study.

"Information Science and the PSI Phenomenon" is the name of an article by Emil H. Levine. Psi is a term used by parapsychologists to refer to psychic powers. Levine argues for the importance of studying PSI phenomena, "While the PSI phenomenon will likely remain controversial for some time, it is a potential method of transferring information. As such, it should be an area of continuing

---

[5]Paul Clancy, "Witch Ways O.K. by Air Force," USA Today, 25 April 1989, Sec. A, p. 2.

[6]"Insights," Benefits Canada (January/February 1988): 5.

[7]"Salvation Army To Pay Fired 'Witch,'" Times Picayune, 28 April 1989, Sec. B, p.6.

[8]"Witches Tax Break," Christian Century 99 (June 9, 1982): 689.

[9]Daniel Jussim, "An Attack on Witchcraft (Bill to Repeal Tax Exempt Status of Covens)," Macleans 98 (November 25, 1985): 64.

interest to the information scientist."[10]

Georgess McHargue argues in her article, "A Ride across the Mystic Bridge, or, Occult Books: What, Why, and Who Needs Them,"[11] that there is, indeed, an occult explosion and that librarians have been largely unresponsive in meeting public demands. She writes, "The field in general has been held in such low esteem that tools of research such as specialized bibliographies, indexes, and library collections are few or nonexistent."[12]

In "Why Are Librarians Scared of the Occult,"[13] author Bob Duckett states, "A book on magic is treated in the same way as one on How to poison or Forgery for beginners,"[14] and then goes on to discuss how the occult has grown in popularity on the recent years, but is still viewed negatively by many librarians. He concludes: "The boom in the occult is part of a whole new sub-culture that librarians are not recognizing."[15]

"Occultism and Parapsychology: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Serials,"[16] is relevant to this study, not so much for the titles it offers, but for information about trends in publishing, librarians'

---

[10]Emil H. Levine, "Information Science and the PSI Phenomenon," Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science 11 (June/July 1985): 32.

[11]Georgess McHargue, "A Ride Across the Mystic Bridge, or, Occult Books: What, Why, and Who Needs Them," Library Journal 98 (May 15, 1973): 1635-1640.

[12]Ibid., 1640.

[13]Bob Duckett, "Why Are Librarians Scared of the Occult," Assistant Librarian 67 (May 1974): 76-78.

[14]Ibid., 77.

[15]Ibid., 78.

[16]George R. Jaramillo, "Occultism and Parapsychology: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Serials," The Serials Librarian 4 (Summer 1980): 417-426.

responses, and possible reasons for theses responses (or lack of them). First, with finite serials budgets, librarians may have other priorities; second, librarians may have personal biases that may make them not want to choose these serials; and third, librarians may find it difficult to justify these purchases to patrons.

Censorship of occult books appears to be a growing problem. A report titled "Censorship Continues Unabated; Extremists Adopt Mainstream Tactics"[17] states that attacks on intellectual freedom have grown, and that the focus is now on charges of Satanism and the occult. "Witches, Demons, Ghosts, and Werewolves...in Our Schools,"[18] discusses the attempts of citizens to ban materials from public schools saying, "Recently, many efforts to remove books and other educational materials from public school libraries and classrooms have focused on the alleged promotion of witchcraft and the occult in these materials."[19]

Charges such as these have also been levelled at libraries elsewhere. "Trustees Remove Witchcraft Book from Kentucky Library,"[20] "Citizens Challenge Occult Books, Blast School Library Standards,"[21] and "Occult Books Removed from W.Va. School Library"[22] deal with censorship cases, respectively, in Kentucky, New

---

[17]"Censorship Continues Unabated: Extremists Adopt Mainstream Tactics," Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom 37 (November 1988): 193-194.

[18]"Witches, Demons, Ghosts, and Werewolves...in Our Schools," Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom 36 (May 1987): 79+.

[19]Ibid., 79.

[20]Edith McCormick, "Trustees Remove Witchcraft Book from Kentucky Library," American Libraries 19 (July 1987): 544.

[21]Beverly Goldberg, "Citizens Challenge Occult Books, Blast School Library Standards," American Libraries 19 (June 1988): 431+.

[22]Gordon Flagg, "Occult Books Removed from W.Va. School Library," American Libraries 20 (July 1989): 628.

Mexico, and West Virginia, while "Protestors Try To Nix Witch Talk"[23] tell of pressures put upon a San Jose, California, library after librarians had invited a witch to speak about her beliefs.

While censorship of this type may be a problem for libraries, it has not, as of yet, taken aim at the publishing world. A recent edition of Publishers Weekly was devoted entirely to New Age publishing and included the articles "New Age Causes Growing Pains in General Bookstores"[24] and "Children in the New Age Bookstore."[25] The articles discuss the proliferation and popularity of New Age titles and suggest that as more children are being exposed to these areas of interest, the future adult population will continue demanding them. In a different issue of the same periodical, however, Margaret Jones[26] and Jeremy P. Tarcher[27] see this trend as reversing.

---

[23]Edith McCormick, "Protestors Try To Nix Witch Talk," American Libraries 17 (July 1986): 503+.

[24]Allene Symons and Barry List, "New Age Causes Growing Pains in General Bookstores," Publishers Weekly 232 (September 25, 1987): 73.

[25]Suzanne Little, "Children in the New Age Bookstore," Publishers Weekly 232 (September 25, 1987): 72.

[26]Margaret Jones, "Convergence at the Bookstore," Publishers Weekly 236 (November 3, 1989): 32-34.

[27]Jeremy P. Tarcher, "Here's to the End of 'New Age' Publishing," Publishers Weekly 236 (November 3, 1989): 36.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this paper is to determine if there is any tendency towards bias in general encyclopedic works. In order to do this, three multi-volume encyclopedias were purposively selected on account of their popularity among librarians and patrons and their reputations for high quality. These works are Encyclopedia Americana, Encyclopaedia Britannica, and World Book Encyclopedia.

Since the occult was the specific topic of inquiry within these works, it became necessary to identify the terms which were to be the basis of analysis. It was decided that this would be accomplished by starting with the entry "Occultism" in each source. This term and all cross-references from it were selected; from the entries for all cross-referenced terms, cross-references were likewise taken. Once this process was completed, terms were taken from the index in a similar manner. The terms found in each work are listed in the "Results" section of this paper under the respective encyclopedia. Brief definitions of these terms are included in the appendix. One exception from this should be noted: non-specific cross-references were not taken when it was unclear as to the exact nature of the intended reference. This, however, happened only once when the Britannica Macropaedia article broadly referred to related topics in

the Propaedia section"Religion."

The articles were analyzed statement by statement. A **statement** is defined as a single assertion which may comprise all or only part of a sentence. Statements are discovered by dissolving compound sentences or compound subjects, verbs, or objects into individual sentences. Only the explicit content of the statement was analyzed; no attempt was made to determine a statement's implicit bias. Each statement is placed into only one of twenty-one categories:

1. **Definitions** include the first appearance of a term accompanied by a description of the intent or content of objects, beliefs, and practices. The definition is usually the first group of statements in an article. Statements are not classed in this category when it is clear from the context that they are meant to be an expansion of previously defined terms.
2. **Claims (favorable)** is a statement indicating that an occult belief or practice is or has been held by a person or persons. Not included in this category are statements implying that a specific person has held a certain belief.
3. **Claims (unfavorable)** includes statements that people have or do disbelieve or doubt the efficacy of the occult. Does not include statements claiming that specific persons disbelieved in the occult.
4. **Extrapolation (positive)** expands upon a previously defined occult topic. Included in this category are statements expressing the popularity or efficacy of these beliefs.
5. **Extrapolation (negative)** includes statements that expand upon a previously defined belief or practice in such a way as to

express the unpopularity or inefficacy of the same.

6. **Extrapolation (neutral)** is an expansion of a previously defined term to include other terms, concepts, and philosophies. Includes descriptions of belief and practices that have little or no connection with the occult. Also included are expansions of occult terms, concepts, and philosophies which do not include any reference to the popularity or efficacy of such things.

7. **History (positive)** is a description of a type of occultism as it was or is practiced by primitive, ancient, or modern peoples or cultures. Statements are placed here rather than in extrapolation when it is unclear that the specific referent has already been established. Not included here are statements that people have, historically, believed in the occult, or that it has, historically, been harmful or helpful to people.

8. **History (negative)** includes statements that occultism was not or is not practiced by primitive, ancient, or modern peoples or cultures. Does not include statements claiming that persons do disbelieve or have disbelieved in occultism.

9. **History (neutral)** includes statements that introduce some topic that is not related to occultism.

10. **Occultism causes personal harm** includes statements that say an occult belief or practice did, does, or might cause harm to an individual. Does not include claims that people belive that occult powers cause harm. Personal harm is damage to the mental or physical well-being of any person or persons. this damage can be inflicted by a second party or by oneself; furthermore, this damage need not be caused by an overt act of violence but may be caused by

neglect of adequate care or mental cruelty.

11. **Occultism prevents personal harm** includes statements that say an occult belief or practice did, does, or might prevent harm from coming to an individual. Does not include claims that people belive that occult powers prevent personal harm.

12. **Prominent person named (positive)** includes statements that a specific person believed in an occult idea. Does not include statements that a person's work indicates proof of occultism, but does include statements that a person's work indicates his or her own personal belief. "Prominent person" is meant to include any named individual. Only explicit references to personal names or references in which a specific person's identity is clear from the context are classed here.

13. **Prominent person named (negative)** includes statements that a specific person disbelieved in an occult idea. Does not include statements that a person's work indicates a disproof of occultism, but does include statements claiming that a person's work indicates his or her own personal disbelief or skepticism.

14. Statements are classed in **Prominent person named (neutral)** when a person is named without any indication of his or her personal opinion or when that opinion is expressed concerning a topic not related to occultism. Does not include statements indicating that others have made a claim as to a person's belief or disbelief.

15. **Occultism based upon faulty reasoning** includes statements that claim that the basis of any occult belief is a misunderstanding of some natural process. Includes claims that occultism, even though previously linked with science, diverged from a course of rational

inquiry.

16. **Occultism based upon science** includes statements that occultism was, at any given time, based upon the known principles of science. Includes any statements indicating that occultism may have been the science of a given epoch.

17. **Social, cultural, or artistic basis for occultism** includes claims that occultism is based upon a human need, such as a need for social control, or upon previous religious beliefs or philosophies, or upon some previous artistic work, such as folktales.

18. **Basis (neutral)** includes those statements which claim that the occult comes from an unknown origin or which states that the origin is linked with the origin of something else (e.g. the origin of alchemy is linked to the origin of chemistry) without implying a causal relationship.

19. **Occultism as a basis for scientific discovery** includes statements that claim that a scientific advancement at some point in history was based upon an occult philosophy or upon the discoveries of occultists. Scientific discovery is any new theory, process, event, or object which conforms, at the time of its discovery, with the prevailing models of science. Science refers to that field of human knowledge which attempts to define all occurrences as products of natural law or laws. For the most part, science demands that any occurrence either be reproducible or definable in such a way that it is shown to be a result of previously understood phenomena.

20. **Occultism as a social, cultural, or artistic impetus** includes statements that occult beliefs and practices serve as a foundation for social relationships, cultural institutions, or works of

art. Examples of the above would be, respectively, community relationships, legal structures, and literary works.

21. **Miscellaneous** is used to categorizes statements from non-occult articles. These articles include personal names, mythological persons, any subject which might be found in a modern academic curriculum, and any other subject which is generally not considered an occult topic. Also included here are "see" or "see also" references include within the body of the text.

Analysis

In order to analyze the results of this study, the scores from each encyclopedia will be discussed in terms of their relative positions. The encyclopedias will be compared to determine if any patterns have emerged.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Encyclopedia Americana

Within the text of the Americana there is a total of three cross-references--two from the primary term "Occultism," and one from a secondary term--for a total number of four terms. Within the index, the primary term produces five cross-reference. None of these terms are cross-referenced within the index, but, upon searching out these terms within the text, five more cross-references are found. This should leave fifteen terms, but due to duplication, there is only a total of twelve terms altogether: "Astrology," "Clairvoyance," "Devil, the," "Divination," "Divining Rod," "Extrasensory Perception," "Hypnosis," "Magic," "Magic, Stage," "Occultism," "Parapsychology," and "Witchcraft."

After the completion of the categorization of statements, the variables have been placed in ranked order:

1.	Basis (neutral):	3
2.	Occultism based upon faulty reasoning:	5
3.	Occultism based upon science:	8
	Prominent person named (neutral):	8
4.	Prominent person named (negative):	11
5.	Occultism as a basis for scientific discovery:	13

6.	Social, cultural, artistic basis for occultism:	28
7.	Claims (unfavorable):	33
	Prominent person named (positive):	33
8.	Occultism prevents personal harm:	34
9.	History (negative):	37
10.	Occultism causes personal harm:	47
11.	Extrapolation (negative):	63
12.	Definitions:	65
13.	Occultism as a social, cultural, or artistic impetus:	80
14.	History (neutral):	91
15.	Claims (favorable):	136
16.	History (positive):	193
17.	Extrapolation (positive):	235
18.	Extrapolation (neutral):	273
19.	Miscellaneous:	494

The single largest category in the Americana is "Miscellaneous." "Extrapolation (neutral)" and "Extrapolation (positive)" are the next two largest categories, respectively. "Extrapolation (negative)" is only a moderately high category, but it still figures more prominently than do most categories covering the basis of occultism or those dealing with prominent persons.

The "History (positive)" and "History (neutral)" categories hold very high positions. "History (negative)", likewise scores highly. This is particularly important because of the positions of categories covering the basis of occultism. Three of the four lowest categories deal with the basis of occultism: "Basis (neutral)," "Occultism based upon faulty reasoning," and "Occultism based upon

science." "Social, cultural, or artistic basis for occultism" also scores relatively low. "Prominent person named (neutral)" and "Prominent person named (negative)" score low, and, while "Prominent person named (positive)" scores somewhat higher, it is still low in relation to other categories.

"Claims (positive)" ranks highly in contrast to "Claims (negative)," whereas "Occultism causes personal harm" scores only marginally higher than "Occultism prevents personal harm." Of the two groups, there is a much greater gap between the numbers of the first set than between the numbers of the second.

"Occultism as an impetus for science" is ranked relatively low compared to "Occultism as a social, cultural, or artistic impetus." "Definitions" ranks as moderately high.

Encyclopaedia Britannica

The text of the Britannica leads to six cross-reference, all of which are repeated in the index. These secondary articles lead to no new entries within the text, but, in the index, five new entries are identified. It should also be mentioned that there are two entries for "Occultism," one in the Micropaedia and one in the Macropaedia; there are, therefore, a total of twelve entries in the Britannica: "Alchemy," "Astrology," "Conjuring," "Divination," "Horoscope," "Magic," "Magician," Occultism (Micropaedia)," "Occultism (Macropaedia)," "Oneiromancy," "Sorcery," and "Witchcraft." The variables are ranked as follows:

1. Occultism based upon science: 21
2. Occultism based upon faulty reasoning: 22

3.	Basis (neutral):	27
4.	Occultism prevents personal harm:	29
5.	Prominent person named (neutral):	35
6.	Prominent person named (negative):	37
7.	Occultism causes personal harm:	39
8.	Claims (unfavorable):	51
9.	Occultism as a basis for scientific discovery:	54
10.	History (neutral):	79
11.	Occultism as a social, cultural, or artistic impetus:	85
12.	Miscellaneous:	96
13.	Claims (favorable):	98
14.	History (negative):	107
15.	Extrapolation (neutral):	119
16.	Definitions:	123
17.	Extrapolation (negative):	138
18.	Social, cultural, or artistic basis for occultism:	164
19.	Prominent person named (positive):	169
20.	Extrapolation (positive):	741
21.	History (positive):	830

The largest category in the Britannica is "History (positive)." "History (negative)" and "History (neutral)" fall far behind. "Extrapolation (positive)," "Extrapolation (negative)," and "Extrapolation (neutral)" follow a similar pattern, though not so scattered.

"Prominent person named (positive)" scores within the three highest categories, whereas "Prominent person named (neutral)" and "Prominent person named (negative)" score very low.

As with the Americana, the three lowest categories are those that cover the basis of occult belief or practices--"Occultism based upon science," "Occultism based upon faulty reasoning," and "Basis (neutral)." It should be noted, however, that "Social, cultural, or artistic impetus for occultism" scores very high.

"Occultism prevents personal harm" and "Occultism causes personal harm" are not a very large part of the coverage this encyclopedia gives to the occult. In a similar manner, great emphasis is not placed upon either "Claims (favorable)" or "Claims (unfavorable)"; nonetheless, there is more of a gap between these than between the above-mentioned pair.

"Occultism as a social, cultural, or artistic impetus" and "Occultism as a basis for scientific discovery," both of which reside approximately in the middle of the ranking, have similar scores. "Definitions" is only moderately high, and "Miscellaneous" does not play as important a part as in the other encyclopedias.

World Book Encyclopedia

There are twenty-one terms derived by taking the cross-references from "Occultism." These twenty-one lead to another one-hundred and thirty-six terms. The total, then, should be one-hundred and fifty-eight, but, because of duplication, there is only a list of sixty-eight terms: "Alchemy," "Amulet," "Astrology," "Augur," "Birthstone," "Blarney Stone," "Cell (the Cytoplasm)," "Chemistry (History)," "Circe," "Clairvoyance," "Constellation," "Divination," "Ectoplasm," "Evil Eye," "Exorcism," "Extrasensory Perception,"

"Fetish," "Fortunetelling," "Freud," "Sigmund," "Friday," "Geber," "Genie," "Ghost," "Gold," "Graphology," "Halloween," "Hecate," "Horoscope," "House (in Astrology)," "Hypnotism," "Kabbalah," "Magi," "Magic," "Mather," "Medea," "Mental Illness," "Mesmer, Franz," "Metallurgy (History)," "Mind Reading," "Moon (Legend and Folklore)," "Necromancy," "Nostradamus," "Numerology," "Omen," "Occultism," "Oracle," "Ouija Board," "Palmistry," "Parapsychology," "Phrenology," "Pioneer Life in America (Caring for the Sick)," "Psychiatry," "Psychical Research," "Psychoanalysis," "Psychology," "Psychotherapy," "Salem (Mass.)," "Sewall, Samuel," "Spiritualism," "Suggestion," "Superstition," "Taboo," "Telepathy," "Trance," "Vampire," "Voodoo," "Witchcraft," and "Zodiac." The variables are ranked as follows:

1.	Occultism based upon science:	0
2.	Prominent person named (negative):	4
3.	Occultism based upon faulty reasoning:	5
4.	Occultism as a basis for scientific discovery:	7
5.	Basis (neutral):	8
6.	Prominent person named (neutral):	9
7.	Occultism prevents personal harm:	21
8.	Occultism as a social, cultural, or artistic impetus:	22
9.	History (negative):	25
10.	Social, cultural, or artistic basis for occultism:	27
	Prominent person named (positive):	27
11.	Extrapolation (negative):	35
12.	Claims (negative):	41
13.	Occultism causes personal harm:	58

14. History (neutral):	101
15. Extrapolation (neutral):	125
16. Definitions:	157
17. Claims (favorable):	169
18. History (positive):	412
19. Extrapolation (positive):	658
20. Miscellaneous:	2396

The single greatest score in the World Book is in the "Miscellaneous" category. This score is followed, after a large interval, by "Extrapolation (positive)," "History (positive)," "Claims (positive)," and "Definitions." "Extrapolation (neutral)" and "History (neutral)," respectively, come next. "Extrapolation (negative)" and "History (negative)," while not next, fall at about the middle of the ranking.

"Occultism causes personal harm" occurs much more often than "Occultism prevents personal harm"; "Prominent person named (positive)," "Prominent person named (negative)," and "Prominent person named (neutral)" are spaced somewhat evenly apart.

Categories which describe the basis of occultism--"Occultism based upon science," "Occultism based upon faulty reasoning," "Social, cultural, or artistic basis for occultism," and "Basis (neutral)"--are all low scoring categories, though "Social, cultural, or artistic basis for occultism" is higher than the rest. In a similar manner "Occultism as an impetus for scientific discovery" and "Occultism as a social, cultural, or artistic influence" score somewhat low. "Claims (negative)" scores relatively high, though not nearly as high as "Claims (positive)."

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Meaning of the Results

If it were true that each encyclopedia offered a totally unbiased representation of each subject, then each category of variables would be exactly even in its score. This is not the case. There are certain categories and certain groups of categories which are given much greater emphasis in the different works.

The "Miscellaneous" category receives the greatest weight in the Americana and the World Book, while in the Britannica it is relatively unimportant. This indicates that the indexing in the Britannica is much more precise than the indexing of the other two. In fact, it indicates that there is a confusion that exists within all three as to what exactly the occult is and what additional materials are relevant to the topic.

The number of terms cross-referenced in each encyclopedia is a problem for a similar reason. There are only a few terms covered in all three reference tools that are linked to the term "Occultism" by means of cross-reference: "Astrology," "Divination," "Magic," and "Witchcraft." Many terms are found in all three encyclopedias--"Parapsychology," "Extrasensory Perception," "Voodoo," and "Vampire" being only a few examples--but are not all available to

researchers starting at the same access point in different works. It might, therefore, be beneficial for librarians ans patrons to keep in mind that, at times, it can be possible for patrons to use one encyclopedia as an index to another encyclopedia.

All three encyclopedias generally give low stress to groups of categories that include the basis for occultism. "Social, Cultural, and Artistic Basis for Occultism" consistently scores higher than other categories in this group, but is, nonetheless, overshadowed in all cases by at least one "History" category. In the Americana, it is lower than all three "History" categories, in the World Book it is lower than two categories--"History (positive)" and "History (neutral)"--and in the Britannica it is lower than only one--"History (positive)." This would imply that the Britannica is the only encyclopedia that treats occultism in its full historical range rather than selectively focusing on isolated historical events.

"Prominent person named" categories score low in both the Americana and the World Book. Of the individual categories in these groups, "Prominent person named (positive)" scores highest. In the Britannica, although "Prominent person named (negative)" and "Prominent person named (neutral)" both score low, "Prominent person named (positive)" is one of the highest categories.

The "Extrapolation" categories consistently score high in all three encyclopedias. This might indicate that all three present some amount of in-depth information concerning topics. The Americana is the only one of the three that scores higher in "Extrapolation (neutral)" than "Extrapolation (positive)," and it could be said that there might be a trend towards including irrelevant information in

many of their articles.

In all three of the encyclopedias the category "Occultism causes personal harm" scores higher than "Occultism prevents personal harm"; however, in no encyclopedia does either of these categories score particularly high. All three give major emphasis to definitions. There is, likewise, a trend in all three to emphasize positive "Claims (positive)" over "Claims (negative)," the largest difference between the two categories being in the Americana. Finally, "Occultism as a social, cultural, or artistic impetus" consistently scores higher than "Occultism as an impetus for scientific discovery."

It appears, then, that the Americana emphasizes miscellaneous information, a great deal of relevant and irrelevant background material, the history of occultism, and claims made in favor of the occult. Very little emphasis is given to the historical basis of occultism or to prominent persons who were opponents or proponents of the occult.

The Britannica emphasizes the history of the occult and the origins of its development in social, cultural, or artistic phenomena. A great deal of attention is also given to relevant exposition of the topic and to discussing person who were involved with the occult. Very little attention is given to the origins of occultism in scientific or other phenomena.

The World Book gives most of its attention to miscellaneous information. However, closely following this, it devotes a great deal of space to background material about the subject, to history, and to positive claims made about occultism. It give little emphasis to the

basis of occult beliefs and practices.

Recommendations for Future Study

If this study is to be replicated, one group of categories in particular must be redefined--"Extrapolation." While it is clear from this preliminary investigation that "Extrapolation (positive)," "Extrapolation (negative)," and "Extrapolation (neutral)" comprise a large portion of the discussion of the occult, the knowledge gained concerning the specific portion of the occult is minimal, since the study was not designed to show whether any category (i.e. "Claims," "History," or "Prominent person named") was extrapolated upon in any greater degree than any other. In the future, it is recommended that the "Extrapolation" categories be abandoned in favor of categories that link the extrapolation to on particular aspect--in other words, include categories such as "Claims (favorable-extrapolation)," "History (positive-extrapolation)," etc.

The categories of "Claims" are likewise problematic in that they do not include any indication of the strength of claims made. As an example, there is an implicit message in a statement such as "Primitive people believed in magic; however, scientists dismiss magic as nonsense." therefore, the study should be designed to give a certain amount of weight to different claims made. In fact, it is recommended that the entire study be weighted, since it was originally designed to test explicit bias, not implicit. Again, as an example, there is a vast difference between stating that Sir Isaac Newton was a practitioner of alchemy and stating that Adolf Hitler employed astrologers.

Since the presence of so many "Miscellaneous" statements is due, no doubt, to the cross-referencing of terms not relevant to the topic, it is recommended that future researchers devise an authority list of terms that are available in all encyclopedias and use this as a basis rather than using terms gathered from the indexing practices of the particular encyclopedias. Researchers could also use these separate terms as a basis of comparison rather than merely analyzing the encyclopedias as a whole.

Finally, due to the differences in indexing practices, future researchers might wish to focus their attentions upon the relevance of "see" and "see also" references for any subject to discover any significant differences in the ways encyclopedias outline knowledge.

Conclusion

On the basis of this content analysis, it can be concluded that at least three highly respected encyclopedias present a certain amount of bias in their treatment of the occult. While the results are not conclusive of the direction or nature of those biases, there is enough evidence to warrant further investigation.

CHAPTER 6

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adler, Margot. Drawing Down the Moon: Witches, Druid, Goddess-Worshippers, and Other Pagans in America Today. Revised and Expanded Edition. Boston: Beacon Press, 1986.

Budd, Richard W., Robert K. Thorp, and Lewis Donohew. Content Analysis of Communications. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967.

"Censorship Continues Unabated: Extremists Adopt Mainstream Tactics." Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom 37 (November 1988): 193-194.

Duckett, Bob. "Why Are Librarians Scared of the Occult?" Assistant Librarian 67 (May 1974): 76-78.

Flagg, Gordon. "Occult Books Removed from W. Va. School Library." American Libraries 20 (July 1989): 628.

Goldberg, Beverly. "Citizens Challenge Occult Books, Blast School Library Standards." American Libraries 19 (June 1988): 431+.

Jaramillo, George R. "Occultism and Parapsychology: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Serials." The Serials Librarian 4 (Summer 1980): 417-426.

Jones, Margaret. "Convergence at the Bookstore." Publishers Weekly 236 (November 3, 1989): 32-34.

Jussim, Daniel. "An Attack on Witchcraft (Bill to Repeal Tax Exempt Status of Covens)." Macleans 98 (November 25, 1985): 64.

Kirkpatrick, R. George, Rich Rainey, and Kathryn Rubi. "An Empirical Study of Wiccan Religion in Postindustrial society." Free Inquiry in Creative Sociology 14 (May 1986): 33-38.

Levine, Emil H. "Information Science and the PSI Phenomenon." Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science 11 (June/July 1985): 6-7+.

Little, Suzanne. "Children in the New Age Bookstore." Publishers Weekly 232 (September 25, 1987): 73.

McCormick, Edith. "Protestors Try to Nix Witch Talk." American Libraries 17 (July 1986): 503+.

McCormick, Edith. "Trustees Remove Witchcraft Book from Kentucky Library." American Libraries 19 (July 1987): 544.

McHargue, Georgess. "A Ride Across the Mystic Bridge, or, Occult Books: What, Why, and Who Needs Them?" Library Journal 98 (May 15, 1973): 1635-1640.

Sonquist, John A., and William C. Dunkelberg. Survey and Opinion Research: Procedures for Processing and Analysis. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977.

Spector, Paul E. Research Designs. Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences, eds. John L. Sullivan and Richard G. Niemi, no. 23. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1981.

Symons, Allene, and Barry List. "New Age Causes Growing Pains in General Bookstores." Publishers Weekly 232 (September 25, 1987): 73.

Tarcher, Jeremy P. "Here's to the End of 'New Age' Publishing," Publishers Weekly 236 (November 3, 1989): 36.

Truzzi, Marcello. "Towards a Sociology of the Occult: Notes on Modern Witchcraft." In Religious Movements in Contemporary America, ed. Irving I. Zaretsky and Mark P. Leone. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974.

"Witches, Demons, Ghosts, and Werewolves...In Our Schools." Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom 36 (May 1987): 79+.

"Witches Tax Break." Christian Century 99 (June 9, 1982): 689.

CHAPTER 7

APPENDIX

Glossary

The following are definitions of those terms found in Encyclopedia Americana, Encyclopaedia Britannica, and World Book Encyclopedia using the cross-referencing method discussed in chapter 3. The definitions are loosely based upon those found within the above-mentioned encyclopedias.

Alchemy: An early physical science which, some say, was the predecessor of chemistry. While prevalent in various forms in both Eastern and Western civilizations, it is most often characterized by attempts to transmute various metals into gold.

Amulet: A charm worn around the neck which supposedly has magical powers.

Astrology: A term used to describe the practice of predicting the future by observing astronomical events. According to many sources, astrology was the predecessor of the modern science of astronomy.

Augur: An ancient Roman official whose duty it was to predict the future by use of various signs.

Birthstone: A jewel or stone associated with a particular month of the year.

Blarney Stone: A famous stone in Ireland which supposedly conveys special powers upon anyone who kisses it.

Cell (the Cytoplasm): All the matter in a cell other than the nucleus.

Chemistry (History): The history of that part of science which deals primarily with the composition of organic and inorganic matter at a molecular and atomic level.

Circe: A witch in Greek mythology who charmed men and turned them into animals.

Clairvoyance: the ability to view objects or events at a distance without the benefit of any of the known senses.

Conjuring: The art of using stage magic or sleight-of-hand for the purpose of entertainment.

Constellation: A group of stars that forms a set pattern in a certain portion of the sky.

Devil, the: In Christian theology, the adversary of God.

Divination: The process of trying to foretell the future by supernatural means.

Divining Rod: A forked rod or stick which, when held in both hands, is supposed to arch downward when subterranean water is present.

Ectoplasm: A smokelike substance which supposedly emanates from the body of a medium or channel during a seance.

Evil Eye: The power to harm people merely by looking at them.

Exorcism: The act of driving away demons or spirits by performing certain rites and rituals.

Extrasensory Perception: A term used to generally refer to any one of several paranormal phenomena, including telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, and psychokinesis.

Fetish: An unusual attraction, usually sexual in nature, to an inanimate object.

Fortunetelling: The act of foretelling, or pretending to foretell, the future.

Freud, Sigmund: Often called the father of modern psychology, he lived during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Friday: The sixth day of the week.

Geber: An early alchemist of Arabian descent.

Genie: A creature in Arabian folklore that is supposedly made of smokeless fire.

Ghost: Supposedly the spirit of a dead person who has arisen from the grave to walk the earth.

Gold: An elemental metal which is favored for its beauty and is used as currency.

Graphology: The practice of trying to determine the personality of an individual by examining his or her handwriting.

Halloween: A holiday celebrated in Europe and America which occurs every October 31. The celebration is usually associated with witches, ghosts, and other supernatural creatures. It is a popular activity for children to dress in costumes and be given candy by their neighbors.

Hecate: A character in Greek mythology who was the goddess of magic, the moon, and witchcraft.

Horoscope: A chart which can be read to determine a person's future.

House (in Astrology): One of twelve divisions of the evening sky through which the signs of the zodiac travel.

Hypnosis/Hypnotism: The act of placing oneself or another into a trancelike state, often characterized by hypersuggestability.

Kabbalah: A system of Jewish mysticism that traces its origins to the thirteenth century.

Magi: Priests of ancient religions of the Mesopotamian region and Persia.

Magic: The alteration of physical nature or human events through the use of either natural powers or spells, rituals, and incantations.

Magic, Stage: The use of naturally produced trickery to create the illusion that real magic is being performed.

Magician: A man or a women who performs stage magic.

Mather: Three generations of a Massachusetts family--Richard, Cotton, and Increase--who have been linked to the Salem witchcraft trials.

Medea: A sorceress in Greek mythology who killed her children and fed them to her husband.

Mental Illness: A state of psychological dysfunction.

Mesmer, Franz: An early pioneer in the field of hypnotism who believed that all illnesses were caused by an imbalance of animal magnetism within the human body.

Metallurgy (History): The historical development of the craft of extracting metal from mineral materials and of refining that

metal for use in various man-made products.

Mind Reading: The alleged power to see or hear the thoughts of another person.

Moon (Legend and Folklore): Folktales and legends relating to a large mass of rock orbiting the earth.

Necromancy: The practice of communicating with the dead.

Nostradamus: A French seer of the sixteenth century who foretold his own death.

Numerology: The practice of predicting the future or character of a person by manipulating the numbers in his or her birthdate or from the numeric equivalent of the letters of that person's name.

Occultism: A belief system which claims access to or control over powers not associated with a currently recognized concept of the laws of nature. It differs from religion either in that the occult is usually not recognized by society as an organized body of beliefs or believers, or that it is considered harmful and detrimental to that society or its members.

Omen: A sign that is supposed to foretell the future.

Oneiromancy: Foretelling the future by the interpretation of dreams.

Oracle: One who reads signs or omens to foretell the future.

Ouija Board: A rectangular board with letters, numbers. and words printed on it; the user lightly touches his or her fingertips to a pointer which slides across the top of the board, spelling out messages from the dead.

Palmistry: The practice of foretelling the future by reading

the lines in the palm of a person's hand.

Parapsychology: The study of extrasensory perception and other paranormal activities.

Phrenology: Reading a person's character by examining the shape of his or her skull.

Pioneer Life in America (Caring for the Sick): Treatment of the sick in early rural American life by using herbal cures and folk remedies.

Psychiatry: The treatment of the mentally ill by a specially trained medical doctor.

Psychical Research: Research into the nature of parapsychological abilities.

Psychoanalysis: A special type of psychiatric treatment given to the mentally ill by a medical doctor.

Psychology: the scientific study of the human mind. This is a neutral term.

Psychotherapy: A psychological treatment or counseling process which may or may not be administered by a medical doctor.

Salem (Mass.): A town in eastern Massachusetts which was the site of the famous American witchcraft trials.

Sewall, Samuel: A judge at the Salem witchcraft trials.

Sorcery: Magic performed through the use of spells and rituals; it is distinguished from witchcraft in that sorcery is not an innate power.

Spiritualism: A religion that began in America in the nineteenth century; practitioners believe they can communicate with the dead.

Suggestion: A state in which an individual readily accepts ideas impressed upon him by another.

Superstition: An irrational belief that one event can affect another without a logical causal relationship.

Taboo: An action, person, or object that is considered unclean or sacred by traditional laws.

Telepathy: The ability to see or hear the thoughts of another person.

Trance: An altered state of consciousness in which an individual has little or no conscious control.

Vampire: A mythological creature which supposedly drinks the blood of the living.

Voodoo: A religion which is a blend of French Catholicism and native African beliefs; followers supposedly practice black magic.

Witchcraft: The innate power of certain persons, either male or female, to perform magical acts.

Zodiac: A band of twelve constellations which, during the course of a year, travels through the twelve houses of the horoscope.